

In the claims:

Please amend claims 1, 3, 5-6, 11 and 15. A detailed listing of the claims is presented, below.

1. (Currently Amended) A method for preparing a soy sour cream composition comprising:
 - providing an aqueous soy composition;
 - fermenting said soy composition with thermophilic bacteria until said soy composition has a pH of about 4.0 to about 5.0;
 - incorporating ~~at least one of~~ an oil, ~~and~~ a fat component and/or a combination thereof with said fermented soy composition; and
 - heating said fermented soy composition to a temperature sufficient to substantially deactivate about 50% to 100% of said thermophilic bacteria.
2. (Original) The method of Claim 1 wherein said aqueous soy composition comprises a soy milk.
3. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 1 wherein said aqueous soy composition comprises water, a dry whole soybean particulate and ~~at least one of~~ a food grade acid, ~~and~~ a salt of said acid or a combination thereof.
4. (Original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising incorporating a fat component with said aqueous soy composition and treating said soy composition at a pressure greater than about 2,000 psi.
5. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 1 wherein said fermented soy composition is heated for ~~at least one of~~ a time, ~~and~~ a temperature or a combination thereof sufficient to substantially discontinue fermentation.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 5 wherein said fermented soy composition is heated for ~~at least one of a time, and a temperature or a combination thereof~~ sufficient to provide a substantially aseptic sour cream composition.

7. (Original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising treating fermented soy composition at a pressure greater than about 2000 psi.

8. (Original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising dehydrating said fermented soy composition.

9. (Original) The method of Claim 8 wherein said fermented soy composition is spray dried.

10. (Original) The method of Claim 8 comprising addition of water to reconstitute said dehydrated soy composition.

11. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing a sour cream product comprising:

providing an aqueous soy composition;
fermenting said aqueous soy composition with at least one ~~thermophilic~~ bacterial culture, said fermentation at a temperature between about 40°C and about 50°C;
incorporating at least one of an oil, and a fat component and/or a combination thereof with said fermented soy composition;
stabilizing said fermented soy composition; and
heating said fermented soy composition to a temperature sufficient to provide a substantially aseptic sour cream product.

12. (Original) The process of Claim 11 wherein said fat and said oil component is selected from the group consisting of animal fats, vegetable oils, vegetable fats and combinations thereof.

13. (Original) The method of Claim 11 wherein said thermophilic bacterial culture comprises at least one Lactobacillus strain and at least one Streptococcus strain.

14. (Original) The method of Claim 11 further comprising adding a food grade acid to adjust the pH of the fermented soy composition.

15. (Currently Amended) A method of using thermophilic bacterial culture to prepare an acidified base soy composition, said method comprising:

providing an aqueous soy composition, said composition comprising whole soybean material;

introducing at least one thermophilic bacterial culture to said composition; and

fermenting said soy composition for a time and at a temperature sufficient to acidify said soy composition to a pH less than about 5.0, said fermentation substantially absent an animal sugar.

16. (Original) The method of Claim 15 further comprising incorporation of said fermented composition with a fat component sufficient to provide a sour cream.

17. (Original) The method of Claim 15 further comprising dehydrating said fermented soy composition.

Claims 18-33. Canceled.